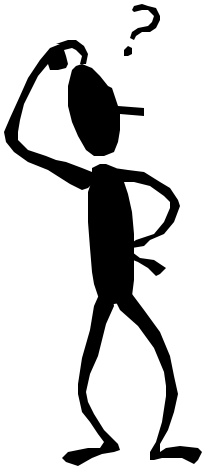
Conflict and Negotiating



What is conflict?

_____
_____
_____

What are disagreements?

_____
_____
_____

List some situations in your work place that cause conflict and/or disagreements:

_____
_____
_____
_____

What are some of the possible causes of these problems?

_____
_____
_____

You can't control what others think or do, but you can minimize conflict by taking responsibility for your actions and reactions.

It is a fact of nature that people don't always get along or agree on everything. Conflict will be minimized if the climate in the work place puts people at ease and permits real feelings to be expressed.

- Treat others with respect and consideration.
- Use communication tools that minimize defensiveness and miscommunication.
- Recognize and control your "knee-jerk" reactions.
- Negotiate agreements that are Win-Win.
- Continue to develop a trusting relationship with the people you work with.

Treat others with respect and consideration . . .

Convincing another person to do something involves saying and doing the things that cause others to ***want to do*** what you want them to do.

- If you put another person on the defensive, you will NOT succeed in convincing them of anything!

- If you belittle the opinions of others, are argumentative and always sure of your own viewpoint, the other person will feel hostile toward you.

- If you are friendly, appeal to the other's desire for fairness and excellence, request advice where appropriate, acknowledge effort, and sympathize with his real issues, you will have a better chance of changing his thinking.

- People tend to agree with, and like listening to, information that makes them feel worthwhile.

In your work situations, what things could you say that might make agreement and acceptance more likely?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

You may think the other person is wrong, but it's very important to understand that what they do and say makes sense to them!

Why do you think it is important to develop and preserve relationships in business situations?

Use communication tools that minimize defensiveness and miscommunication . . .

How you say something is ***SIX TIMES*** as important as **what** you say.

Communication is made up of three parts—

55% non verbal—expressions, gestures

38% tone of voice

7% actual words

Instead of giving orders, make requests

Look at the following phrases:

"You'll have to take this to George."
"You'll have to have it ready in time for the meeting."

Any time you tell someone they "have" to do something, he or she usually reacts with the "3 Rs":

Reluctance
Resentment
Resistance

Only when you ***want*** to do something will you take that action voluntarily. That is why it is important to re-frame orders into requests or recommendations.

Imagine how much better you would feel if someone re-worded the commands above into requests.

Listen for understanding . . .

Listening requires that you focus on the other person. You help them communicate by:

PAC

P = Probe and Paraphrase
A = Acknowledge and Analyze
C = Clarify actions/solutions

Probe and Paraphrase

Show the person that you are interested in what they have to say.
Encourage the speaker with short verbal responses.
Avoid interrupting, making judgements, or changing the subject.
Ask questions.
Restate what you think you heard.

Acknowledge and Analyze

Acknowledge and assess the problems and issues.
Acknowledge the speaker's emotions (if appropriate).
Determine the relevant facts.

Clarify Actions and Solutions

Develop a win-win solution.
Determine responsibility for actions.
Follow up.

Ask Questions

Questions can be productive or draining! They can make the employee feel comfortable opening up and build trust, or they can cause the employee to become defensive and justify his actions or behavior.

Consider the following questions:

Why are you behind schedule?
What's the problem with this project?
Why are you slower than the others?
What's your problem?
Who did that?
Why did you do that?
Who made that decision?

What reactions would you have to those questions?

How could the above questions be worded to be less threatening and discouraging?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Guidelines for asking questions:

- Ask "what" or "how", rather than why.
- Ask open-ended questions (you can often put a "what" or a "how" at the beginning of a question to make it open ended).
- Place the focus on the person answering.
  - What is your opinion?
  - How do you feel about doing it this way?
- Be an effective listener.

Examples of effective questions include:

What is already working?
What makes it work?
What is the objective?
How could we get this done on time?
What are the benefits of achieving this objective?

Adapted from Enlightened Leadership, Oakley and Krug

Don't personalize the situation, focus on the facts . . .

By focusing on facts, you minimize blame, reduce defensive reactions, and encourage cooperation.

Suppose you need a report by 7:00 a.m. and you find that it won't be ready until 8:30. How would you address this issue with the employee responsible for getting the report to you on time?

In difficult or negative situations,

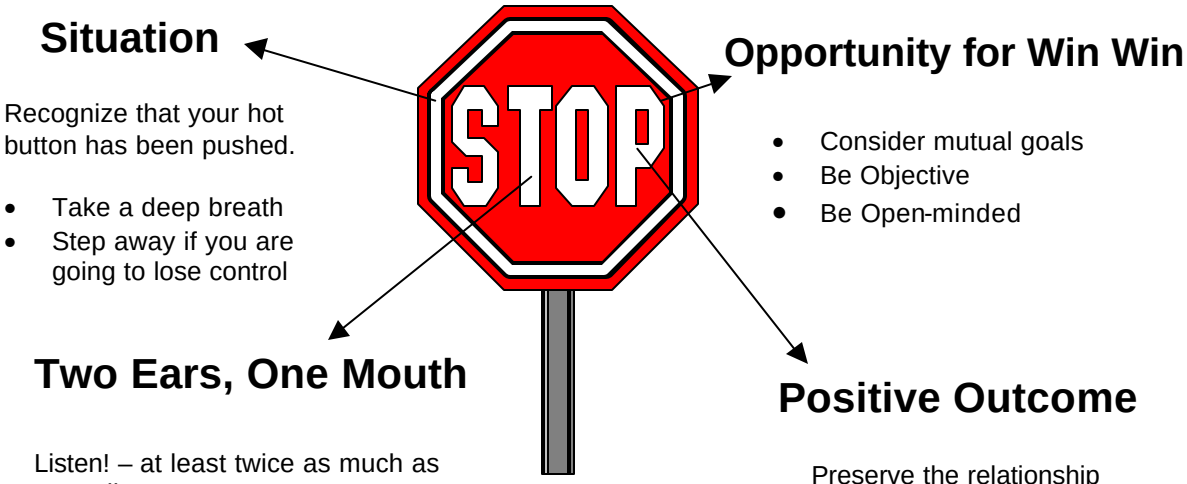
- Avoid using "you" statements and making judgements.
  Let's look at ways . . .
  Let's talk about . . .
- Get the **facts** about the situation.
- Don't blame or point fingers. Focus on the issues, not the person.

Recognize and control your "knee-jerk" reactions . . .

What are your "Hot Buttons"

What physical cues tell you that one of your hot buttons has been pushed?

When your hot button is pushed, **STOP**!



Are your Hot Buttons always the same?

Negotiate Agreements that are Win-Win . . .

When an outcome has a winner and a loser, there are really TWO losers! The loser loses and the winner loses because the loser either won't honor the agreement or will honor the agreement, but just barely! The loser will probably not be inclined to help you in the future either. It is to everyone's advantage to arrive at a win-win solution.

There are five general styles for dealing with conflict and disagreements:

Win-Win

Two people work it out
Requires good interpersonal skills

Example: *I understand your problem and I know we don't agree about how soon we can get the products out. Since we agree on the importance of an early delivery, what can we do to reduce the time?*

Win-Lose

One person wins, the other goes away with a sense of failure

Example: *Listen, my department can't be ready to ship by your date. That's all there is to it. Figure out some other way.*

Lose-Lose

Both give up something not as important in order to keep a more important item

Example: My department will work overtime to meet the deadline, but you need to . . .

Yield-Lose

One person gives in, but the other doesn't feel like he got what he needed either

Example: *I'll go along with that shipping date, but we'll have to hold off on the shipment to XYZ Company.*

Lose-Leave One withdraws

Example: *If you make that decision, just leave my department out of it.*

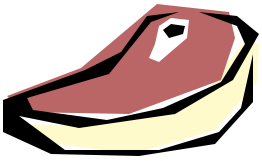
What is negotiation?

Think about coming home from work one night and really wanting a good steak for dinner. Your spouse announces that Chinese food would taste really good. What would you do?

_____

_____

_____



OR

?

There are two things to consider – position-based negotiation and needs-based negotiation. In this case you want steak and your spouse wants Chinese food—you both have a position that you would like satisfied. But what are your needs? You need to eat, but any food could satisfy that need. You might feel that peace and harmony are a need, so you may seek a dinner that will satisfy both you and your spouse. Your goals, and the goals of your team, will determine the outcome of this negotiation.

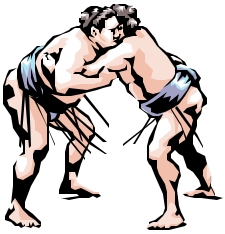
Suppose the steak you want represents a client's requirements and procedures. Now your bargaining position is different. You have to have steak—that's no longer negotiable. But how are you going to get your spouse to not only agree, but be cooperative and even happy about it?

Approaches that have one party winning and the other losing don't really require negotiation skills. Examples of this type of solution might be:

- Kill the other person.

- Surrender to the other person even though you aren't happy about it.
- Order the other person to do what you want them to do.
-
-
-
-

In each of these solutions, one person wins—no attempt is made to find a mutually acceptable alternative.



Other approaches have parties working cooperatively to find a solution:

- You give in this time, the other person will give in next time.
- Go to a restaurant that serves both steak and Chinese food .
-
-
-

The difference between these approaches is that **both** parties are more likely to feel that the solution is acceptable. The ***relationship*** between the parties is not damaged.

Obviously the best strategy to resolve disagreements would produce a **Win-Win** outcome where both parties felt listened to, understood, and satisfied with the results.

1. Determine what you want as an outcome.

2. Anticipate the goals of the other party.

   The people you are dealing with in business generally won't tell you what their goals are. Some questions you might want to consider in trying to figure this out are:

   - How do I see my own goals?
   - What does the other party probably think my goals are?
   - How do I want the other party to perceive my goals?
   - How do I perceive the other party's goals?
   - How does the other party probably perceive their goals?
   - How does the other party want me to perceive their goals?

Select a situation in your job that has caused disagreement. Answer the following questions for that situation:

How do I see my goals?_____

What does the other person probably think my goals are?_____

How do I want the other person to perceive my goals?_____

How do I perceive the other person's goals?_____

How does the other person probably perceive their goals?_____

How does the other person want me to perceive their goals?_____

Think about ways you can align both sets of goals:

_____

_____

_____

3. Plan to accomplish your objectives.

4. Reach agreements that are win-win.

Working in a Work Group

Working in a work group requires a special set of skills to achieve win-win outcomes.

1. What are the goals and objectives of your team?

2. When dealing with others on your team, always follow the basic principles for interpersonal relationships:

    - Focus on the issues or behaviors rather than the person.
    - Treat others with courtesy and consideration.
    - Support your co-worker's efforts.
    - Be an example--Honor your commitments, admit your mistakes, and be open to new ideas.

3. When differences arise among the work group, always ask "WHY?"

    - Why do you want a particular thing?
    - Why do I want another thing?
    - Why do you NOT want what I want?
    - Why do I NOT want what you want?
    -

4. Consider letting the other person have his/her way!

    Don't get trapped into feeling like you have to negotiate simply because you don't want to look like you're giving in—the request might be reasonable and might also be a very good solution. Unless you could be setting a bad precedent, it's usually best to honor every REASONABLE request!

When you (or your work group) are wrong, don't let your desire to "win" prevent you from choosing the best solution to a problem.

What would you say to a member of your work group who really has come up with a good idea or solution to a problem that is different from yours?

_____

_____

_____

5. Find another way to give the other person what he really wants.

   Review the WHYs above and be creative in finding a solution that works for the team.

Dealing with Aggressive Behavior

Occasionally you may have to work with a person who considers you the "opponent." These preconceptions might come from an US vs. THEM feeling, or just the fact that the person has had a bad day!

It is important to try to defuse non-constructive emotional behavior in work situations and try to refocus the energy toward positive, productive solutions to the issues.

- Calmly acknowledge the emotional behavior.
- Describe how the behavior is affecting the discussion.
- Decide whether the discussion can be continued constructively.
- Give an opportunity to refocus on the issues at hand.
- LISTEN for understanding.
- Express support and reassurance.

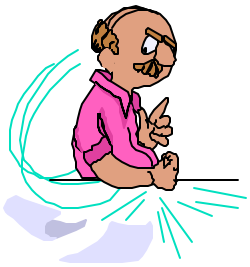
Continue to develop a trusting relationship with the people you are dealing with

Be honest.
Keep your word.
Treat others as individuals and not a means to an end.
Honor your commitments, admit your mistakes, and be open to new ideas.
Where there are problems, ***focus on the issues or behavior, not the person!***
Look for things that are done right and give ***specific*** compliments on them.
Thank others for . .. (be specific!)

Treat the other person the way you would want to be treated, never make promises you don't intend to keep, --a sense of trust takes time to develop, but can be destroyed in an instant.

Personality plays an important role in the communication process. There are four basic personality styles. Each of us has some elements of each, but one personality is generally more dominant than the others.

Personalities in the Work Place . . .



Driver

Makes direct eye contact.
Moves quickly and briskly with purpose.
Speaks forcefully and fast-paced.
Uses direct, bottom-line language.
Has planning calendars and project outlines displayed in the office.

Expressive

Uses rapid hand and arm gestures.
Speaks quickly with lots of animation and inflection.
Has a wide range of facial expressions.
Uses language that is persuasive.
Has a work space cluttered with inspirational items.

Analytical

Shows little facial expression.
Has controlled body movements with slow gestures.
Has little inflection in the voice and may tend toward monotone.
Uses language that is precise and focuses on specific details.
Has charts, graphs, and statistics displayed in the office.

Amiable

Has a friendly facial expression.
Makes frequent eye contact.
Uses non-aggressive, non-dramatic gestures.
Speaks slowly and in soft tones with moderate inflection.
Uses language that is supportive and encouraging.
Displays lots of family pictures in the office.

Deal with Conflict Early

Every major conflict started as minor problems. Addressing these problems honestly and effectively can reduce or eliminate the escalation to major conflicts.

Disagreements are magnified if one party feels misunderstood. Step back from the conflict—don't get into a shouting match. Speak up, but remain calm. We often listen to ***respond***, rather than to ***understand***.

Be a complete listener—use your ears more than your mouth!
Listen or talk, but don't do both at the same time.
Articulate your position without attacking the other person

If someone offends you, approach the person by describing your feelings about the specific situation or behavior. Preserve the self esteem of the other person to allow them to respond without becoming defensive.

_____
_____
_____

If your behavior has offended another, admit your mistakes, apologize, and ask forgiveness.

_____
_____
_____

Handling conflict between your employees when you are not part of the conflict . . .

When should you step in?

Threatening situation.
Affecting the performance of either of the workers.
Affecting co-workers.
Causing stress.

Deal with each person individually first

- Select an appropriate place and time—the earlier the better.
- State the specific event, action or behavior that is a concern.
  - Give the facts.
  - Tell why it is a concern.
  - Show how it is impacting others.
- Analyze the reasons the problem exists.
  - Does the employee know it's a problem?
  - Did he/she realize how it was affecting others?
  - Was he/she aware of the consequences?
- Get the employee's viewpoint.
  - Use listening and questioning skills.
  - Keep the discussion focused.
  - Focus on the situation or behavior, not the people involved.
  - What outside factors are affecting the employee?
- Develop solutions the employee can commit to.
  - Brainstorm.
  - Give examples.
  - Seek input from the employee.
- Be clear about the consequences of not solving the problem.
- Support the employee's efforts.
  - Thank them.
  - Encourage them to solve the problem.

Why supervisors/managers don't take action . . .

- Fear of emotional outbursts.
  - Be sensitive, but redirect the focus positively.
  - Focus on the situation or behavior and its impact, not the person.
  - Have a clear picture of why this is a problem.
  - Have ideas for a solution in mind in case the employee doesn't.
  - Follow up.
- Fear of incompetence in dealing with interpersonal situations.
  - Practice.
  - Realize the longer the inappropriate behavior continues, the harder it will be to change and to repair the relationship.